



Volume XIX No. 4
July - August 2007

Flagship

SEATTLE DISTRICT

Chittenden Locks
endure 12-hour
shut down fol-
lowing accident
Pages 6-7

Inside this issue:

Leader's Corner 2

National awardee 3

Third leg in health bench 4

USACE Heroes 5

Locks gets hit 6 to 7

Office sustainability 8

Bigfoot & the Corps 9

Around the District 11

Postcards from the Front 12



U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Vol. XIX

No. 4

Living within our means – banks happy customers

Unless you are independently wealthy, you probably live on a budget ... setting aside money from your paycheck to pay for mortgage/rent, transportation, food, utilities, and "fun" Managing your financial resources where your expenses are at, or below, your income is what we call "living within our mean."

Living within our means generally requires developing a plan and executing the plan. The plan, of course, identifies the goal (I want to be a millionaire when I retire), criteria are established, priorities set, and a schedule laid out. How many of us do that? Do you have a financial plan? Managing a budget is hard work and requires a lot of self-discipline.

Here at work, it is just as important to live within our means. Whether you are project funded or in an overhead/support office, our customers and stakeholders are counting on us to live within our means and be good stewards of their tax dollars.

So what does it take to be a good steward of the American tax dollars? Develop a plan and execute the plan.

The plan can come in many forms. Our formal PMBP process is set up to help Project Managers focus on the customer's needs and deliver a

quality product on time and within budget. There is also the formal budgeting process that takes into account other expenses we incur to meet our mission.

In particular, formulating our operating budgets (the overhead accounts) takes the talent of many people to identify what we will need in a given fiscal year to support employees who charge directly to a funded project.

So are we, as a district, living within our means? I would say we do a "fair" job of living within our means. We definitely have room for improvement. Expenses (some within our control, others that are not) are causing our overhead rates to be higher than average.

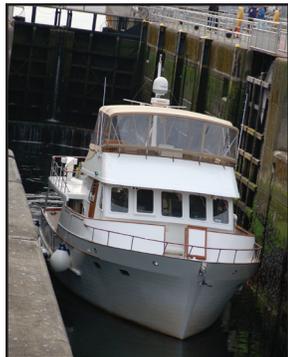
What happens when someone expends outside their means? If a person or office lives outside of their targeted budget, it not only hurts themselves, but hurts the district. Generally someone will have to take from one office to cover the expenses of another ... potentially causing them not to accomplish their plan; for lack of adequate funding.

So what can we do? We can improve by ensuring our plans are well thought through and are realistic in identifying requirements, schedule, and funding. We need to scrutinize our purchases and expenditures and ensure what we are spending money on is really necessary to accomplish the mission.

We're all on this boat together. If we learn to row together, each spending within their assigned allotments, we'll sail through each budget year with well executed projects and happy customers and stakeholders.



Diane Parks
Chief, Operations



Cover: A large private pleasure vessel gingerly gets underway from the Hiram M. Chittenden Lock's small lock in late June just after closure of the large lock for emergency maintenance. The project's salt water barrier had apparently been damaged by transiting marine traffic. Boating season is in full swing, and the employees at the locks keep boats moving – hundreds each day. (Cover photo by Dick Devlin)

Daughter of EM team member helps pass onion law

House Bill 1556 declaring the Walla Walla Sweet Onion the official state vegetable was signed on April 20, 2007 by Gov. Christine Gregoire. Washington state history was made when Senator Maureen Walsh, Toni Miller and two of her students, Claire



Claire McLeod Wilson

McLeod Wilson and Katey Callegari attended the official bill signing ceremony.

Wilson is the daughter of Julia McCleod, emergency management, who is currently deployed to Iraq in support of the Global War on Terror.

The process began in 2003 when Miller and her students from Kirkland Junior High writing letters suggesting the idea to the legislature.

The Walla Walla Sweet is unique to Washington State and is grown nowhere else in the nation or world, reflect the individuality of our state's geography, history

Continued on page 3



This issue was especially prepared for Laurie Wilson, Construction Branch, Supervisory Administrative Officer. She oversees all aspects of administrative procedures, budgets and staffing for both Construction Branch and Northwest Area Office. She works closely with administrative personnel in six separate offices covering three states. She also keeps a flood-fighting team running smoothly and is a community volunteer.

Flagship

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Libby Dam employee brings home national award

Charlie Comer, environmental protection specialist at Libby Dam, took the top spot in the Chief of Engineers Annual Natural Resources Management Award and was named the Environmental Compliance Employee of the Year.

Comer, who also serves as a safety officer, security officer, dam safety officer and emergency management coordinator, was presented the award at the Corps' Senior Leadership Conference in August by Lt. Gen. Robert L. Van Antwerp.

His award reads:

"Charlie performs every task involved with each job at a superior level with the utmost professionalism. The Environmental Management System Plan that Charlie implemented has become the template for all other projects in the Division to follow. In addition, it effectively changed the culture and business processes

at Libby Dam which has not only made the Dam more environmentally friendly, but it is now how we do business at Libby Dam. The Environmental Compliance program

Charlie directs at Libby Dam is a leader... Spill response is a major concern in the Northwest. Charlie effectively addressed these concerns by developing an oil spill containment and emergency response plan in which he trained project employees on how to respond in the event of a spill. Charlie worked with local, State, and Federal agencies to develop the best way to respond to a spill event.

Regardless of the challenge put in front of Charlie Comer, the outcomes of his efforts are reliably successful. His attention to

detail and willingness to go above and beyond the basic requirements make Charlie a huge asset to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers." – Nola Leyde



Charlie Comer

Onion

Continued from page 2

and culture. Also, the Walla Walla Sweet Onion is one of our state's leading agricultural products, benefiting the state economically.

Unfortunately, the bill did not pass, due to potato commissioners competing to have the potato named. The bill was assumed dead. Surprisingly, Alex Hansen, a teacher from Eatonville middle School, picked up on the bill and his students finished the process the Kirkland Junior High students started four years ago. The

students from Eatonville Middle School successfully passed the bill through the rules committee, the House, the Senate, and finally, the bill was passed.

Previous Kirkland Junior High Students and Eatonville Middle School Students celebrated at a barbeque at the Washington State capitol in Olympia feeding over 400 people Walla Walla Sweet Onion Sausages, including Christine Gregoire and other Representa-

tives and Senators.

The entire experience was a great opportunity to get involved in the legislature and be apart our government, McLeod-Wilson said.

"The process shows the power an individual has in government," she said. "Because of the efforts of all these kids, the Walla Walla Sweet Onion is Washington State's official vegetable. If you work hard, you can make a difference – or pass a law."



Students and teacher lobbyists from Kirkland Junior High and Eatonville Middle School enjoy a triumphant moment following the signing of House Bill 1556. The group includes (far left end) Julie McLeod's daughter, Claire McLeod Wilson. McLeod, a member of the District' Emergency Management team, who is currently deployed to Iraq in support of the Global War on Terror. (Courtesy photo)

Keeping up the healthy resolutions

Third leg in health bench includes exercise – aerobic, anaerobic

Editor's Note: As part of the healthy employee initiative, this article, last in a series of three, is written from the perspective of Seattle District employee, Stephen Jesse, who recently has changed his life to reflect healthier living habits. Anyone who is considering changing their diet or beginning a new exercise program should speak with their physician first.

AEROBIC vs ANAEROBIC TRAINING

One of the biggest reasons many people don't stick with a regular exercise regime is because they typically don't begin with a definitive plan.

They walk into a health club completely lost in terms of where to begin, and after doing a few sets on the fly machine or walking for 20-30 minutes on the treadmill they call it good for the day. With little to no change in their physique after a month or two, it's really no wonder that so many people throw in the towel shortly thereafter. What anyone who wishes to change the shape of their body should know is that there are two ways to train – aerobically and anaerobically – and you need to understand how they differ.

Aerobic exercises are performed at lower intensities over longer periods of time. This includes activities like long-distance running, cycling, riding on an elliptical trainer, or taking a step class. Specifically, aerobic means "with oxygen" and activities such as these require a substantial amount of oxygen in order to create the energy needed for an extended period

of time. Aerobic exercise is beneficial because it increases our cardiovascular functionality while simultaneously decreasing body fat. However, this type of training is also highly catabolic which causes a decrease in muscle mass, strength, and speed. While aerobic exercise certainly has its place, in all likelihood it should not be the staple of your exercise program. The solution is to couple it with **anaerobic** training.

The term anaerobic means "without oxygen." This includes any activity performed at a moderate to high intensity for less than two minutes. Under these circumstances, your muscles are performing a high rate of work over a short period of time and the energy is being derived without the presence of oxygen.



Stephen Jesse performs a high-intensity bicep curl; anaerobic training was key in Jesse's ability to shed 60 pounds and keep it off for more than a year. (J. Jacobson photo)

The most obvious form of anaerobic exercise is resistance training (weight lifting), but it also includes sprinting, racquetball, or any other activity that requires sudden bursts of energy.

Like aerobic exercise, anaerobic training also increases your cardiovascular pathways and reduces body fat, but with an added bonus – higher intensity exercises keep your metabolism boosted long after the workout. So, not only will you burn more fat in less time by performing anaerobic exercise, but you will also

keep your metabolism running high even when you're just sitting at your desk. In addition to an increased metabolism, anaerobic exercise will directly result in an increase in muscle size (tone), strength, speed, and even aerobic capacity.

Anaerobic exercise has proven to be so successful, that even traditional aerobic activities such as riding on a stationary bike or climbing the stair master are now being performed anaerobically. Instead of going at a low to moderate pace for 30 to 45 minutes, recent studies are proving that you can burn even more fat by going at a high intensity for 15-20 minutes. One particular study conducted by Washington State University compared the results of participants who engaged in 90

sessions of traditional, low intensity cardio over a 20-week period versus participants who engaged in 25 sessions of moderate intensity cardio followed by 35 sessions of high intensity cardio over a 15-week period.

The result showed the participants who performed the moderate to high-intensity (anaerobic) cardio sessions lost three times more fat despite performing a total of 30 fewer sessions, and they achieved this in 5 fewer weeks than their counterparts.

A real world example of this would be to compare the physiques of marathon runners versus those of sprinters or volleyball players.

The bottom line is that training aerobically and anaerobically are both extremely beneficial to your health, but unless you have plans of becoming an endurance athlete, you don't need to train like one. Aerobic training is time consuming, considered boring by many, and it typically yields less desirable results in regards to an immediate physical transformation. Crank up the intensity by training anaerobically and you'll not only get better results, but you'll get them in much less time.

As I conclude this series, let me emphasize that whether you train aerobically or anaerobically it is by no means the beginning or the end to your physical transformation. It is only one piece of the puzzle that you need to piece together in order to maximize your results. I encourage you to pair physical training with the diet plan covered in the previous **Flagship** issue, but be prepared to commit 100 percent. This is not a quick fix but rather a lifestyle change. I personally lost more than 50 pounds during the first 6 months and I hope that you can achieve even better results, whatever your fitness goals may be. – Stephen Jesse

“Crank up the intensity by training anaerobically and you'll not only get better results, you get them in much less time.”

One of Seattle's own recognized as all-around USACE hero

What would you do if someone called you a hero? When someone calls you hero, it's very disconcerting and uncomfortable, said Joe Marsh when he received notice that he was to attend this year's Senior Leader Conference in Providence, Rhode Island, to be recognized as a hero among the ranks of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

"I'm no hero," he said. "I just did my job."

He's very happy to detail his experiences while deployed and did so upon his return for a Flagship article. In the Jan.-Feb. 2006 issue, Marsh talked all about Capacity Building in Afghanistan, the challenges, the victories, the legacy.

That article then caught the eye of some of the senior leaders within the Corps.

"I was obviously pleased that they recognized the work that I did – but 'hero'?" he said. "The ones that don't come back – Afghan and American – those are heroes."

At the event in early August, Marsh said that to be in front of all the senior and emerging leaders took more bravery than deploying to Afghanistan.

"It was really overwhelming," he said. "I was very nervous, it was a pretty big space and to look out and see all those folks just waiting to hear me speak. But, they were fully engaged and the Chief [of Engineers] made you feel less anxious. What a rare and wonderful opportunity!"

"The other employees who were honored that day were really fantastic," Marsh, an 18-year Corps employee, said. "They were really inspiring."

Marsh was honored along with Emile (Skip) Jacobs from New Orleans District and Dr. Michael (Sonny) Trimble from St. Louis District.



Joe Marsh (second from right) with part of the Capacity Building unit he worked with in Afghanistan. Marsh was recognized at the USACE Senior Leader's Conference as one of the Corps' heroes for the work he did there. (Courtesy photo)

"Joe, is a model of motivation and initiative," said Seattle District Commander Col. Michael McCormick. "More than capacity building, he instilled initiative and motivated the people of Afghanistan. That's very admirable."

"The best part about this whole thing," Marsh said "is that there's new partnerships being formed. Following the ceremony, I had a lot of folks come up to me to congratulate me. They had questions and proposals to join their PDTs (project development teams) as a subject matter expert."

"I'm not a subject-matter expert, but I do have experiences to share. If those lessons learned can help another person, team – great!" He added that the Emails from contacts he made at the conference started pouring in after he returned from Rhode Island.

"I'm really happy to have been a part of something so incredible as my time in Afghanistan, as well as my moment of recognition at the senior leader's conference," Marsh said. – *Casondra Brewster*

Lt. Col. Leighow bids district and Army farewell

Lt. Col. John Leighow retired this August after 22 years in the Army and three years with Seattle District.

Known for his up-beat personality and calm demeanor, Lt. Col. Leighow will be missed by many.

"The people I worked with here are great," Leighow said. "Every day I find some reason to laugh and enjoy the job."

He chose to retire now to stay in the Northwest, and is pursuing career aspirations in the region as a civilian.

From his first assignment as a platoon leader at Fort Campbell, Ky., to his last assignment here in Seattle, Lt. Col. Leighow says he has enjoyed his career in the Army and will miss the camaraderie, the people and the organization itself.

In his career, he endured some difficult assignments, including working on the fast-paced, high profile missile defense program. He also served at Fort Benning, Fort Polk and overseas in Kuwait and Iraq.

Leighow served twice in Alaska, once as a Captain and most recently with the Alaska District. In the Alaska District he helped put together and lead USACE's first Field Force Engineering Forward Engineer Support Team in support of 1st Corps. "That work made me feel most relevant," he said. "USACE was always an enigma to the military. FFE was bringing value-added (technical engineering expertise) to the Army while demonstrating USACE's capabilities. It helped mark USACE as a huge enabler to the military and the nation as we're now seeing

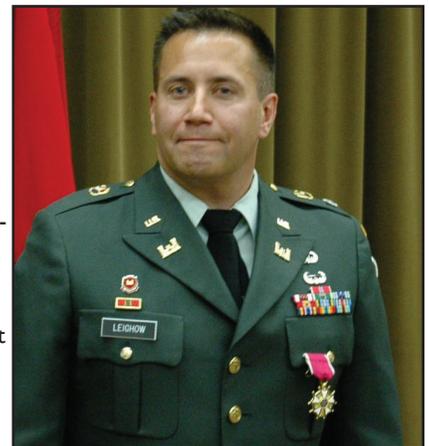
with reconstruction efforts in New Orleans, Iraq, and Afghanistan."

For any assignment he said, "Working with good people can make it all worthwhile. I've had some very challenging assignments but it's the attitude and professionalism of your people that makes even the worst of conditions tolerable."

In his career, Leighow had an opportunity to command and serve as staff. He said he enjoyed being Deputy District Commander.

"I liked being a deputy.

It's great to be able to influence the district from behind the scenes, set the commander and the team up for success and not have to be in the



Lt. Col. John Leighow following the formal retirement ceremony at the District July 27. (Nola Leyde Photo)

Quick action by District Team gets boats loc



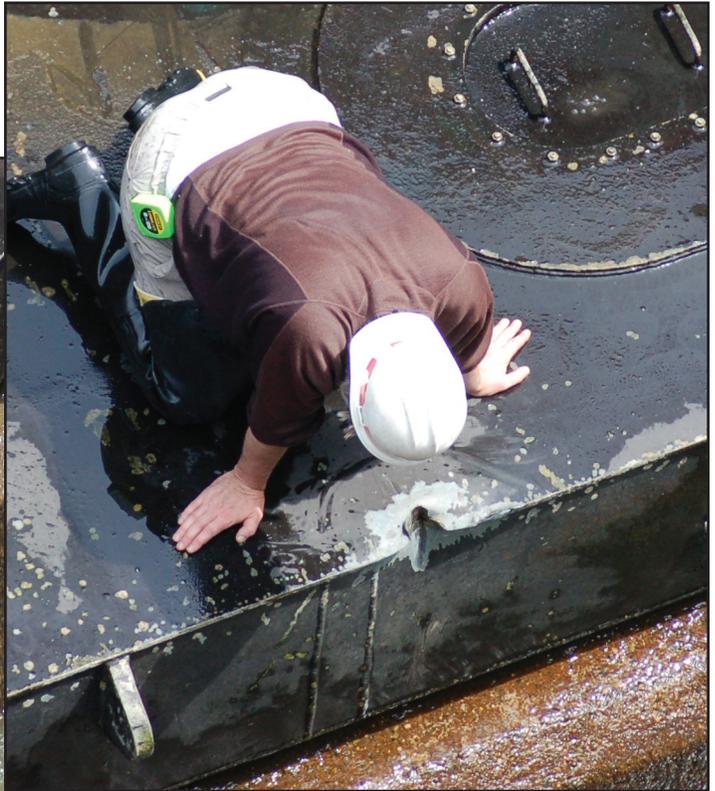
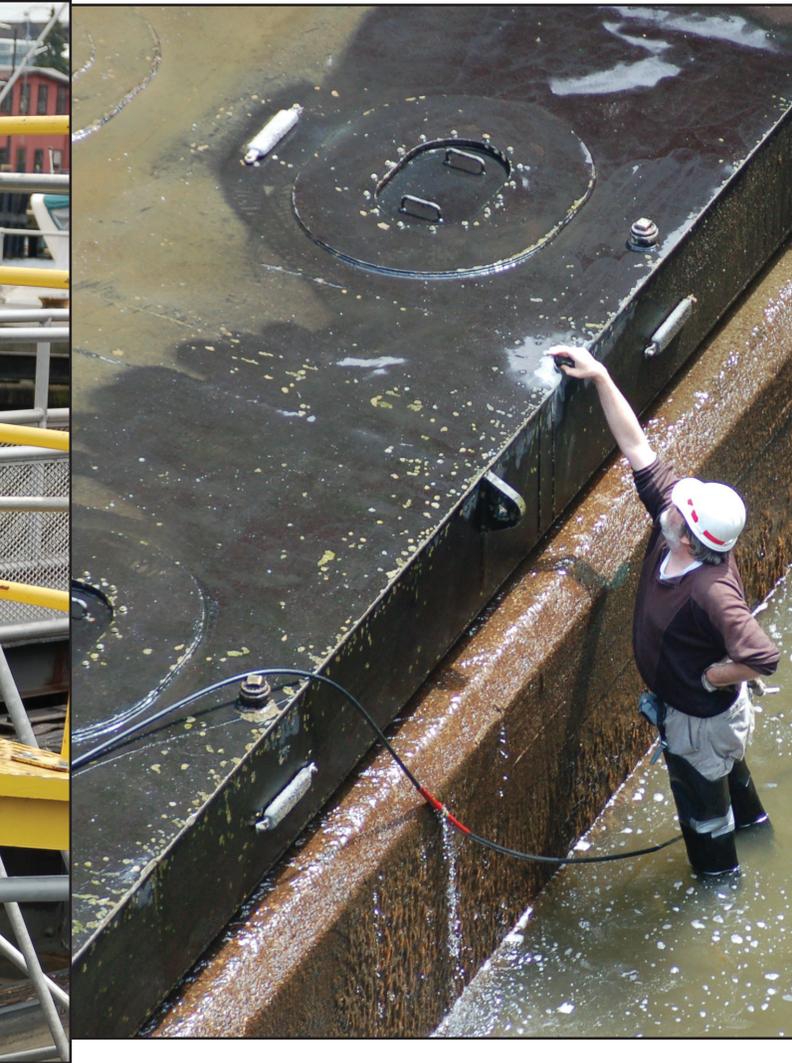
ABOVE: A lock maintenance crew including Steve Hansen, Dave Barnett, Clay Thedy and Craig Morton, strong arm a section of scaffolding into place. Once built against and secured to the lock wall itself, the salt-water barrier, some 40 feet below, was able to be inspected.

ABOVE RIGHT: Jim "The Lock Doc" Ryan get's a close up view of the damage after the barrier was pressure washed. He discovered a clean puncture hole, just below the upper edge of the salt-water barrier when raised on its edge in the upright position.

LEFT: One of the Seattle Harbor Patrol's boats makes for the small lock after Chittenden's large lock was closed for most of a day in June. (Dick Devlin Photos)



Working through again



“We’re not sure exactly what hit the barrier, but it had to be a large vessel transiting the lock,” conjured John Post, Locks Manager for the Chittenden Locks in Seattle staring at the steady stream of bubbles rising to the surface of the large lock.

But, like most things that go “bump” in the night, it probably does not pay to ignore it and a rush of anxious pleasure boaters and commercial vessels showed up early to beat the 9 a.m. closure deadline.

“It’s really bad timing with the Fourth of July crunch already building up,” he offered. “Vessels that can’t fit through the small lock won’t be able to get in or out.”

The large lock at the locks in Ballard had been closed at 9 a.m. June 27, for an emergency dewatering for an undetermined period to make emergency repairs to the salt-water barrier. The barrier had sustained damage from contact with a transiting vessel and would not operate as designed. The barrier minimizes saltwater intrusion into the Lake Washington Ship Canal and helps to ensure the lake’s water quality standards are met. Normally, vessels report their draft to the Lock Master who decides whether the barrier

can stay up or should be flooded internally and lowered horizontally to allow free passage.

“We could reopen as soon as (tomorrow), but we can’t really know for certain until we begin work,” cautioned Post.

The small lock is capable of handling vessels up to 25 feet wide and 100 feet long

Once fully drained, a work scaffolding was constructed allowing repair personnel to descend more than 40 feet into the empty lock to prepare the barrier to be examined by Jim Ryan, aka “The Lock Doc,” who would recommend the best solution to reopening the large lock. When operational, the large lock can be configured to be handle vessels as large as 760 feet long by 80 feet in the beam.

Ryan was pleased be able to overturn earlier underwater camera assessments. The scope of the damage was much less than feared initially. As an expedient, and likely temporary fix, Ryan recommended welding a steel plate to the outer skin of the barrier and over the penetration hole to make it water

tight until the annually scheduled maintenance in November. At that time a more thorough review of permanent repairs can be made, according to Ryan.

Repair crews had set to work to restore full navigation service as soon as possible and the large lock reopened to vessel traffic at 7:45 p.m., less than 12 hours after it was closed, a real achievement for and testimonial to the lock’s crews according to both Post and Ryan.

The Chittenden Locks safely transit well over 60,000 vessels each year between Lake Washington and Salmon Bay in Seattle’s Ballard neighborhood. — Dick Devlin

Moving to a 'Greener' office

Office sustainability friendly not only to environment, but user, wallet, too

The newly remodeled, environmentally friendly entrance to Seattle District's Chief of Engineering and Construction Division is an area built with sustainability in mind while providing a user-friendly entrance to the offices.

"The new open area welcomes people to the Engineering and Construction Branch," said Mark Ohlstrom, chief of engineering and construction, Seattle District. "The area showcases sustainability - these offices are sustainable and professional."

According to Tom Tolman, former Seattle District architect, Seattle District's sustainable initiative is to provide a sustainable workplace for all employees by 2015.

Sustainability is a focus of the Army as it has implemented such programs as Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED). LEED focuses on low-impact site development, recycling, reusing materials, saving water, saving energy and creating healthy indoor environments. Working towards LEED approval as a whole, safeguards human health, improves quality of life, enhances the natural environment, reduces costs and minimizes environmental impacts.

Seattle District designers and engineers put their minds together and researched green office design. Their research focused on sustainable office furniture that maintained a high quality standard.

"Not only are these design features good for the environment they are also saving money," Tolman said. "There are so many simple things that we can do that are cost effective."

Different sustainable features can be found throughout the newly designed office space.

The carpet fiber contains 25 percent recycled content, non Poly(vinyl chloride) (PVC) backing containing 40 percent recycled content, low volatile organic compounds (VOC) emissions and Greenguard certified. Greenguard is a certification of indoor air

quality.

Low-VOC paints, sealants and adhesives were also used. The custom casework is Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified; FSC certified wood is guaranteed milled from a certified sustainability managed forest. Recently, Fort Lewis' forest was FSC certified.

Furniture used in the design is also Greenguard certified. Panels and storage areas were made with 100 percent recycled polyester; lobby seating includes 100 percent recycled polyester and is easy to disassemble for reuse or recycling.

Work surfaces were made with agrifiber board with Marmoleum tops. Marmoleum is a type of tile that is made with linseed oil and other natural materials. Sunflower seed hulls were used in board panels.

The reception area counter top is made from recycled aluminum turnings in eco-friendly resin.

"During research for this project we found ways to print posters in a sustainable manner," said Brenda Bachman, biologist. "A company was found that prints directly on recyclable fabric with a water based ink that saves time, money and resources."

Engineering and Construction Division has set a new standard for sustainable office design in the district, as research continues for future design methods. — Kayla Overton

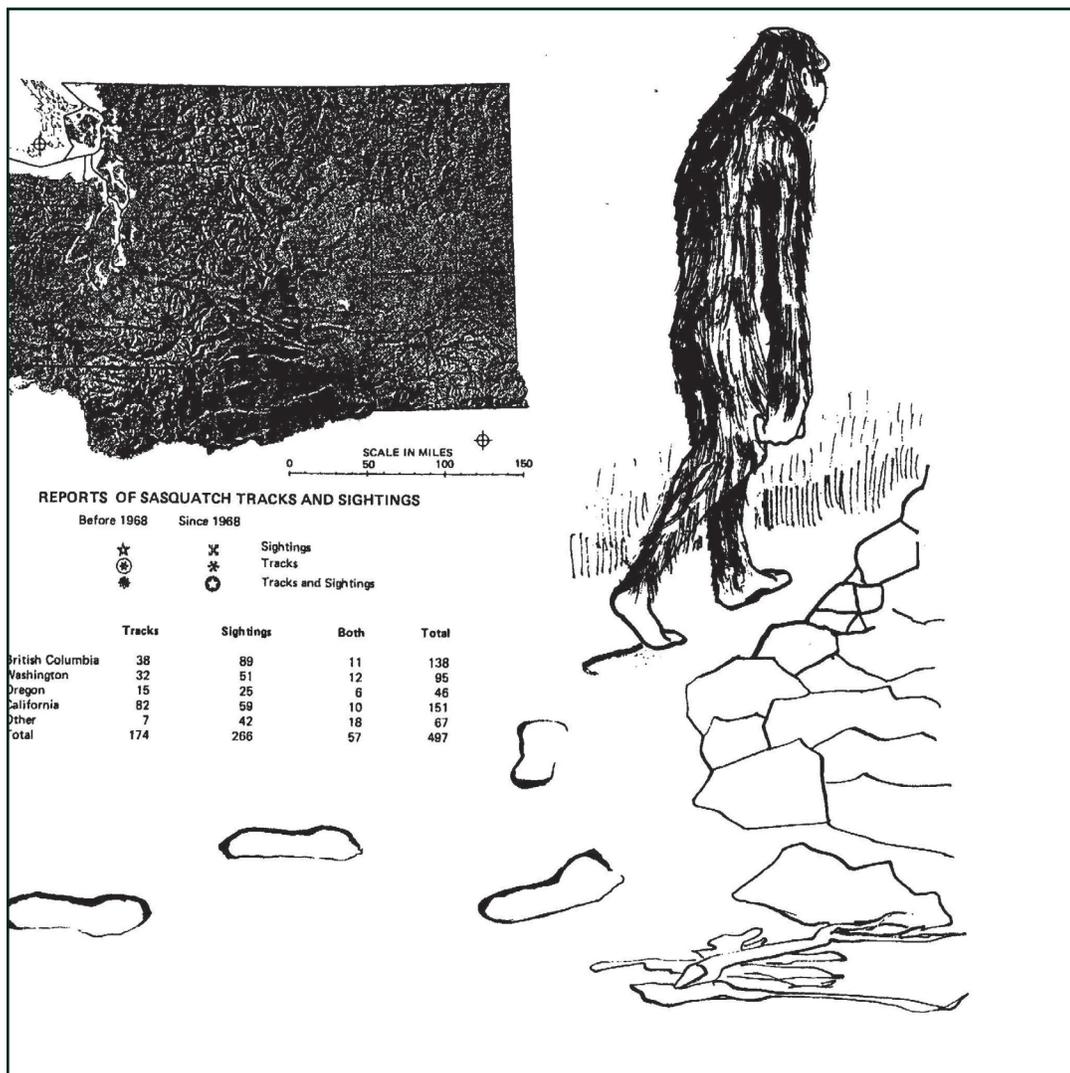


TOP: Before environmental office sustainability took over the Engineering and Construction Branch. **RIGHT:** The new designs and materials not only meet Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) approval, they are user-friendly and the staff enjoys the new digs. Pictured here are Tom Tolman, former district architect, Joyce Rolstad, chief of engineering records and information section, and John Kearns, with contractor - Legacy Group, were all instrumental during the project. (Courtesy & Kayla Overton photos)



Northwest Legend or Truth?

Sasquatch tromps through Corps historical atlas



Above is a view of the original page within the Atlas. The intent of this entry was to show what was environmentally important to the public of the region in the era of the '70s. But the attention garnered by it missed the mark, according to the Atlas' editor. The book is available in the District Library.

Recognition for who we are and what we do is generally appreciated, but not if you're an elusive Sasquatch.

The primate species alternatively known as bigfoot, Gigantopithecus blacki, and tribal and local variations too numerous to list was officially recognized by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Army, and Federal Government when the Corps released the Washington Environmental Atlas in 1975.

At least that's what many believe. Others have characterized the Sasquatch section in the Atlas as a joke or error that slipped through the editing process. So what's the real story?

The atlas was developed in the early 1970s as a reference on Washington's environment for planners and the public. Originally, four atlases were planned for different locations across the country, but Washington's was the only one to involve significant agency and public input and, ultimately, broad dissemination.

Steve Dice was chief of the Environmental Resources Section in the Seattle District where the Atlas was completed.

Dice said, "The original concept for the atlas was for the Corps to document the things the public thought were important environmentally – very broadly environmentally. I put a wildlife biologist/writer editor in charge of the editorship of the atlas project and he could doubtless tell you more of the specifics regarding Sasquatch – in general I believe that he was identified as significant by respondents, so we followed through and documented him."

According to Bob Mowrey, biologist and co-editor of the atlas, the whole point was to have a meaningful discussion of environmental issues while recognizing the need to involve the public. In that spirit, and with the mandate that all comments would be considered, the compilers justified the inclusion of Sasquatch in the atlas as it was clearly of interest to the responding public.

Mowrey told Dice that, based on the public input he was seeing, he would like to include Sasquatch and, with Dice's permission, Mowrey and the co-editor, John Malek, made it happen. According to Malek, "Bob had made a first cut at the text which was only a brief paragraph or so at the time. I rewrote and expanded what he had (mostly a concept draft) after a little research until we decided that it merited its own page. Together we talked to the artist who did the drawings and who was surprised and delighted that the Army was so liberal and open in its thinking. We didn't bother to tell him that we hadn't really

consulted the 'Army' or really anyone else."

When it was published, the Associated Press ran a piece on the Sasquatch reference in a government publication that was picked up by numerous papers across the country.

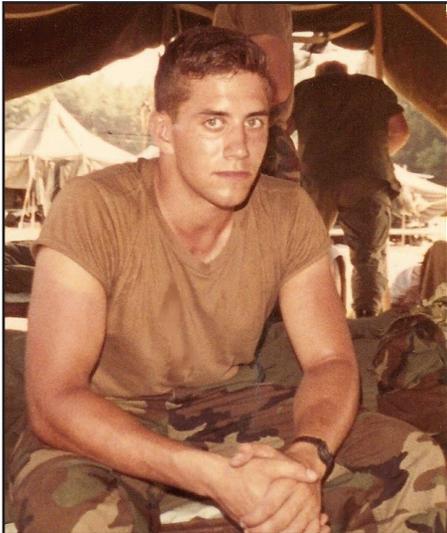
According to Mowrey, the first reactions to it were overdone by media that missed the point and that the "stuffy" Corps Headquarters also failed to see the humor in what they perceived as bad publicity. Reaction by the public and other agencies, however, was overwhelmingly positive and the Sasquatch section became forever associated with the Atlas and vice versa.

Malek said, "If the Atlas hadn't been so good, the Sasquatch might not have made the cut, and if Sasquatch hadn't been part of it, the Atlas probably wouldn't have gotten the scrutiny to see how good it was."

– David Grant (Editor's Note: Grant is an archeologist with the Seattle District, so he's used to digging up artifacts.)

Leighow

Continued from page 5



A young Leighow early in his Army career, nearly 22 years ago. (Courtesy Photo)

limelight. I found I have greater flexibility to move and not get pinned down," he said.

His advice for the next deputy would be to "ask a lot of questions and don't believe the first thing you hear."

At Seattle District, Leighow was deployed to Iraq soon after arriving in the summer of 2004. Upon his return in May 2005, he was put in the position of drawing the Corporate Board together to formulate a clear charter and strategic plan.

"He generally approached most issues with a proper mix of humor and seriousness," said Mike McClellan, Chief of Information Management.

Leighow also served as important continuity between two commanders, which some say has been a key to keeping the district moving forward without a hitch.

"I value his positive and unflappable approach to problem solving, and his functional understanding of USACE operations is exceptional," said Col. Michael McCormick, Seattle District Commander. "He's a bit of a ham when it comes to the Seafair parade, but what the heck."

Lt. Col. Leighow served as acting commander from May 29 to July 27, 2006. He oversaw flood fighting on the Kootenai, worked with Emergency Operations to assure Continuity of Operations, Planning progressed to new levels, and oversaw efforts to re-institute a routine Program Review and Analysis process for the district.

Lt. Col. Leighow is succeeded by Lt. Col. Matt Cadicamo, who became deputy district commander in August.— *Patricia Graesser*

Home fires

Continued from page 12

brink said.

The support at home includes the project manager, the section where he works, wife and family. His wife, Alana Mesenbrink, is a park ranger at Libby Dam. They have been married for three years.

"The best part is that we get to talk each day," said Mesenbrink, who admits that the first part of his tour went rather fast, but as the newness wore off, it drags a little. He got there in March and will coming home in September. He enjoys the camaraderie with the Corps team, soldiers, local nationals and contractors.

"Support from home has been great. I wouldn't be able to do this without family. My wife's family has sent me a lot of cookies, books, letters," said Mesenbrink.

He checks in from time to time with the staff at Libby Dam. "They have had to pick up the slack when someone is deployed and we have had several from Libby Dam that have come in support of the Corps in Iraq," he said. "I had to step up and be foreman when there were three gone at the same time. The work still has to be done. They did bring in some temporary help," Mesenbrink said.

"It's very difficult to have such a qualified electrician leave," said Mick Shea, project manager, who is very much in support of the Global War on Terror, the Corps' number one mission, but realizes there are trade offs.

"He knows the plant, he has years of experience through dozens of maintenance cycles and he is excellent team member. That means other employees in his section have had to pick up his workload and knowledge base.

Some things get delayed, some don't get done as quickly, but we manage to keep power flowing" Shea said.

"We did pick up some help from a term employee replacement, and I have to say that Dwain has done well, but the experience that Dean has is missed. I credit the foreman and others in that section for keeping things going," said Shea. They have done magnificently covering for each other on numerous deployments overseas as well as stateside disaster work.

"The benefit for the dam is a returning employee with a much broader professional and life experience. I think Dean, as well as all the others that have deployed, are more aware of and appreciate what they have at home in U.S. even more."

Mesenbrink agreed. One of his biggest takeaway is learning about a different culture, seeing how they live, people who have nothing. "It's 120 degrees out there, water and electricity in short supply, I don't know how they are making it. The poor are very poor – it makes the states look good in comparison," he said.

Shea checks in on family members when his employees are deployed. "Families seem to do amazingly well on their own. In the beginning of the deployment I will call more often, and check in and just maintain contact and let them know I am here if they need me. But as the deployment goes along, they seem to need that less and I do occasional check ins," said Shea.

Alana Mesenbrink has found the biggest plus of the deployment has been the fact they can talk each day.

"Dean has a phone in his office and we set aside time to talk. It has really helped with the separation," she said. "He is very calm when we talk. We find something new to talk about each day and just the way he talks about the security there, and how tall the barriers are, it helps me from sitting here and fretting about his safety there," she said.

Alana's mom is a nurse in the Army Reserves and will soon deploy to Iraq. Her brother is in the Army and has been to Afghanistan as a combat engineer. Alana found their insights helpful.

"My family has helped in lots of ways. My brother explained how it was to deploy and I understood Dean more as he prepared to go," she said. "Also they have kept his office supplied with oatmeal raisin cookies. They know how important it is for those over there to know we are thinking of them and we care. They go out of their way to find soldiers that need adopted and send packages to them," she said.

Co-workers at Libby Dam have also been very supportive, she said. "They ask how Dean is doing. Not a week goes by that people ask me if I need help," Alana said.

What is most important to Dean Mesenbrink, slated to return next month, is that the people back home support the troops.

"It is a good thing when you get a package in the mail – something to look forward to. The cookies and homemade food, magazines, books, all help to pass the time," he said.— *Nola Leyde*

Welcome to the district family



Steven Hugh Baughman III
Son, 7lbs.
Crystal Baughman, Ranger
Chief Joseph Dam



Kaden Dean Leffler
Grandson, 7lbs 14 ozs.
Pam Gumaer, Exec. Off.



Marcus Gove
Maintenance Foreman
Chief Joseph Dam



Beldin Vaughn Jimenez
Son, 9 lbs 8 ozs.
Bea Jimenez, RM



Brendon Parker
EPS - Student
Regulatory



Amanda Wedvik
EPS- Student
Regulatory



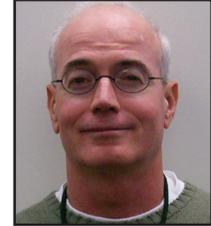
John Derby
Natural Resource Specialist
Operations



Danette Guy
Biologist - Regulatory
Vancouver Area Office



Brooke Medley
Geologist- Student
Engineering & Construction



Michael "Mick" Easterly
Geologist - Anuitant
Engineering & Construction



Frances Avilés
Park Ranger
Chief Joseph Dam



Elizabeth Townsell - DA
Intern - Editorial Assistant
Public Affairs Office



Mary Brass
Secretary
Planning



Erin Legge
Student
Regulatory



Brandie Silkman
Student - Clerk
Contracting



Thomas Bevan
Student - Mech. Eng. Tech.
Engineering & Construction



Michael Likavec
Structural Engineer
Engineering & Construction



Ben Davis - DA Intern
Contract Specialist
Contracting

Around the district

Retirements

Jim Ulrich, Northwest Area Office Area Engineer, retired June 2007 after more than 28 years with the Seattle District, for a total of 32 years Federal Service.

Ron Klump, Regulatory Branch, retired in January, after more than 15 years with the Regulatory Branch and an additional 10 years with the Vancouver Area Office.

Gloria Greenwood retired in May after 21 years at the district, eight of them in the regulatory branch, where she was a secretary. She will remain in the Tacoma area for her retirement.

Steve Meyerholtz, civil engineer, retired in May after 25 years of federal service. He spent most of his career working with dam safety instrumentation systems and did two six-month tours in Afghanistan.

Kudos

Stacy Johnson, office of counsel, was awarded the Chief Counsel 2007 Seltzer

award for outstanding performance in developing a legal application for Libby Dam.

Janet Smith, office of counsel, was also honored as a recipient of the Chief Counsel's Gulf Region Legal Service Team award.



Stacy Johnson

Departures

Kira Lynch has accepted a position as a Remedial Project Manager with the Environmental Protection Agency Region 10 and left the district in early July.

Layna Goodman, project manager, accepted a position with the U.S. Navy and departed the district in July. She worked with the Corps for seven years and before that with the U.S. Geological service.

In Memory

Wanda Christiansen, born May 15, 1921 in Gooding, Idaho passed away May 12, 2007, in Sequim, WA, her home for over 30 years. retired in 1972 after working many years for the Seattle District. She worked in office admin with the "motor pool" perhaps you can fill in the official department name] and often supported flood duty around the Pacific Northwest. Her husband, Myron Christiansen, retired from the Seattle District Real Estate office; he died in 1999.

Send us your professional accomplishments, speaking engagements, wedding engagements, marriages, births and memorials. Contact casondra.brewster@us.army.mil.

Public Affairs Office
 Seattle District (CENWS-PA)
 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
 4735 East Marginal Way South
 Seattle, WA 98134-2392

Postcards From the Front....



Corps employee finds support from home helpful during time in Iraq

"I wouldn't be able to do this without the support from home," said Dean Mesenbrink, a Libby Dam power plant electrician serving at Camp Blue Diamond in Ramadi, Iraq.

Mesenbrink is there on a six-month assignment, serving as a project engineer.

"While I have been here we have put in two new two-megawatt diesel generators, 132 kilovolt overhead lines, a 132 kilovolt substation, a new 11.4 megawatt diesel generator plant and I meet regularly with the directors of electricity for the province," he said.

The transition from the tree-covered hills of Montana to the hot, dry climate in central Iraq for someone who has never been out of the states was made easier with the support he receives from home.

"We are right along the Euphrates River, there are palm trees everywhere, farming, green everywhere, and it is not as much of a

desert as I thought it was going to be, but the heat is something you have to experience to know how hot it really is here. It is 107 degrees in the shade temperatures during the day are 120 and more in the sun," said Mesenbrink.

A native of Bonners Ferry, Idaho, and a resident of Libby, Mont., Mesenbrink started his career with the Corps in 1995 at McNary Dam on the Columbia River. A graduate of Spokane Community College, he applied and was accepted into the Corps' Walla Walla District power plant trainee program. He worked at McNary on the Columbia River and Little



Dean Mesenbrink

Goose Dam on the Snake River near Kahlottus, Wash. Later, he took a position with the Seattle District's Libby Dam.

A typical work day in Iraq includes reviewing daily submittals, reviewing the work of contractors, safety inspections of electrical projects and going out the gate once a week to a joint coordination center meeting with the local Iraqis from the Directorate of Electricity. Travel is with an armed security detail in armored vehicles. He works 79 hours a week, 12 hours a day, except on Friday, which is a religious day for the Iraqis, and then he works 7 hours.

His office is in a doublewide trailer on a camp that has both Army and Marines. "These soldiers are amazing. They have been out all day in 120 degree weather, packing 50 pounds of gear, plus 40 pounds of body armor, and they are still in good spirits and laughing," he said.

"It's not like what you see on TV, but there is no way they could prepare you for this," said Mesenbrink. The camp where he works was in an area of Iraq that was once the seat of terrorist activities.

"It is relatively calm now," he said. "The Iraqi leadership in the area, which includes the sheiks, got together to work with the U.S. Forces and it has made a big difference," Mesen-



Dean Mesenbrink (Right) and a Chicago District Deployee in the office of the Governor of Al Anbar Province in Iraq. Al Anbar is the western most province of Iraq. Mesenbrink's job requires daily interaction with the Iraqi populace. (Courtesy Photo)

Continued on page 10